

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ISLAMA 10165 130957Z

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01 /070 W

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FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4220

INFO MAMEMBASSY ANKARA 3363

AMEMBASSY COLOMBO

AMEMBASSY DACCA

AMEMBASSY KABUL

AMCONSUL KARACHI

AMCONSUL LAHORE

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L ISLAMABAD 10165

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PK

SUBJECT: SMALL PRO-BHUTTO DEMONSTRATIONS IN LAHORE

1. LAHORE HAS BEEN THE SCENE OF SMALL BUT ENTHUSISASTIC PRO-BHUTTO BIMONSTRATIONS THE PAST TWO DAYS. APPROXIMATELY 100 PEOPLE PARTICIPATED ON BOTH OCTOBER 11 AND 12 AND SHOUTED ANTI-ZIA AND ANTI-MARTIAL LAW SLOGANS AND CALLED FOR BHUTTO'S RELEASE. THE MARCHES WERE IN CONTRAVENTION OF MARTIAL LAW REGULATIONS AND ABOUT 25 PARTY WORKERS HAVE BEEN ARRESTED. WE UNDERSTAND A THIRD PROCESSION IS SCHEDULED FOR TODAY, OCTOBER 13. THE PPP EXECUTIVE
CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 02 ISLAMA 10165 130957Z

COMMITTEE HAS DISCLAIMED RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE DEMONSTRATIONS AND CONTENTS IT IS COUNSELING ITS PARTY WORKERS TO REMAIN PATIENT AND QUIET.

2. PART SECRETARY GENERAL KAUSER NIAZI HAD TOLD THE BBC CORRESPONDENT IN AN OFF-THE-RECORD MEETING THAT BHUTTO RECENTLY TOLD BEGUM BHUTTO TO CALL FOR "THE MOVEMENT" AGAINST

THE MARTIAL LAW ADMINISTRATION TO BEGIN. NIAZI SAID THE PARTY WAS DIVIDED, WITH HIMSELF AND OTHER "RIGHTISTS" ON ONE SIDE AND BEGUM BHUTTO ON OTHER "LEFTISTS" ON THE OTHER. NIAZI IMPLIED, HOWEVER, THAT EVEN THOUGH OPINIONS WERE DIVIDED, BOTH FACTIONS BELIEVED IT WAS STILL IN THEIR INTEREST TO REMAIN UNITED. IN AN OMINOUS NOTE, NIAZI ALSO HINTED THAT THE PPP MAY HAVE BEEN RESPONSIBLE FOR RECENT TRAIN DERAILMENTS IN BALUCHINSTAN PROVINCE.

3. GENERAL ZIA HAS SCHEDULED MEETINGS WITH POLITICAL PARTY LEADERS TO DISCUSS "THE CURRENT POLITICAL SITUATION." ON OCTOBER 12, HE MET REPRESENTATIVES FROM THE RELATIVELY INCONSEQUENTIAL QAYYUM MUSLIM LEAGUE AND THE MINISCULE PAKISTAN PEOPLES REPUBLICAN PARTY. ZIA MEETS WITH THE PNA TODAY AND, ACCORDING TO ALLIANCE SPOKESMAN PROFESSOR GHAFOOR, THE PNA WILL ASK THAT A DEFINITE ELECTION DATE BE ANNOUNCED.

4. A MEETING WITH THE PPP IS SCHEDULED FOR OCTOBER 14, BUT THE PARTY IS DIVIDED ON WHETHER TO ATTEND. NIAZI FAVORED A MEETING WHILE BEGUM BHUTTO HAS, IN PARTY COUNCILS, CALLED FOR A BOYCOTT. THE PARTY'S EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE COMPROMISED AND SENT A LETTER TO ZIA WHICH GAVE CERTAIN PRECONDITIONS BEFORE THEY WOULD SEE HIM. INCLUDED WERE EITHER BHUTTO'S RELEASE OR AN OPPORTUNITY FOR THE PARTY LEADERS TO VISIT HIM, RELEASE FROM JAIL OF DETAINED PPP WORKERS (RUMORED TO NUMBER ABOUT 150 COUNTRYWIDE), AND

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PAGE 03 ISLAMA 10165 130957Z

REEMPLOYMENT OF ALL FACTORY WORKERS WHO HAVE BEEN FIRED BECAUSE OF THE STAGNANT ECONOMIC SITUATION.

5. COMMENT- WE ASSUME BEGUM BHUTTO'S FACTION OF THE PPP AT LEAST KNEW OF AND PROBABLY APPROVED THE PLANS TO HOLD SMALL DAILY PROCESSIONS IN LAHORE. IT IS POLITIC, HOWEVER, FOR THE PARTY TO DENY ANY INVOLVEMENT IN STAGING THE PROCESSIONS. THE PPP BENEFITS IF THE MARCHES SHAKE THE MILITARY GOVERNMENT; IF THE PROCESSIONS PROVE INEFFECTUAL, THE PARTY CAN OFFICIALLY AVOID THE POLITICAL EMBARRASSMENT.

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